LATINOS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

MANY ENROLL, TOO FEW GRADUATE

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"The question I like to ask every child I visit in the classroom is, 'Are you going to college?' In this great country, we expect every child, regardless of how he or she is raised, to go to college."–President George W. Bush, remarks at the Griegos Elementary School, Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 15, 2001

A postsecondary degree is widely accepted as a basic goal in education, and the U.S. labor market reinforces that expectation with substantial financial rewards. Latinos lag every other population group in attaining college degrees, especially bachelor's degrees. To better understand that problem and help identify policy responses, the Pew Hispanic Center conducted a new analysis of the educational performance of Latino high school graduates. This analysis is based on Current Population Survey data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau from 1997 to 2000. The data was combined and averaged to create a solid statistical basis for assessing different forms of college attendance for Latinos as compared to other groups and for making important distinctions among sub-groups of the Latino population.

The PHC report shows that large numbers of Latinos are enrolled in postsecondary education. In fact, by some measures a greater share of Latinos are attending college classes than non-Hispanic whites. However, most are pursuing paths associated with lower chances of attaining a bachelor's degree. Many are enrolled in community colleges, many also only attend school part-time, and others delay or prolong their college education into their mid-20s and beyond. These findings clearly show that large numbers of Latinos finish their secondary schooling and try to extend their education but fail to earn a degree. Heretofore, policy-makers and researchers concerned with Hispanic educational achievement have focused most intently on issues related to primary and secondary education, especially high school dropout rates. Those issues are undoubtedly important. This report, however, demonstrates that significant gains can be made with policy initiatives targeted at Latinos who graduated from high school, who applied for and were granted admission to a two- or four-year college and who enrolled. In other words, a great deal can be accomplished by assisting young Hispanics who are trying to secure the credentials that can immensely improve their prospects but who are failing in large numbers.

Some of the study's key findings include:

- About 10 percent of all Latino high school graduates are enrolled in some form of college compared to 7 percent of the total population of high school graduates. Only Asians are enrolled at a higher rate.
- There is a substantial enrollment gap between Latinos and all other groups among 18- to 24-year-olds—the traditional age group for college attendance and the cohort that reaps the greatest economic benefit from a college degree. Only 35 percent of Latino high school graduates in that age group are enrolled in college compared to 46 percent of whites.

- Latinos are far more likely to be enrolled in two-year colleges than any other group. About 40 percent of Latino 18- to 24-year-old college students attend two-year institutions compared to about 25 percent of white and black students in that age group.
- Latinos are more likely to be part-time students. Nearly 85 percent of white 18- to 24-year-old college students are enrolled full-time compared to 75 percent of Latino students in that age group.
- A somewhat greater proportion of Latino high school graduates over the age of 24 years old, some 7 percent, are enrolled in college courses than whites, 5 percent. While ongoing college education can bring important rewards to adults, students who attain a degree at the traditional age see greater economic gains.
- Latinos very clearly lag behind in the pursuit of graduate and professional degrees. Among 25- to 34-year-old high school graduates, nearly 3.8 percent of whites are enrolled in graduate school. Only 1.9 percent of similarly aged Latino high school graduates are pursuing post-baccalaureate studies.

The PHC report also explores the differences in college enrollment among Latinos by generation and country of origin. Some of the key findings in this regard include:

- Native-born Latino high school graduates are enrolling in college at a higher rate than their foreign-born counterparts, and that is especially true of the second generation, the U.S.-born children of immigrants. About 42 percent of second-generation Latinos in the 18-to-24 age range are attending college, which is almost the same as the rate for whites, 46 percent. The figure is lower both for the first generation, 26 percent, and for all those with U.S.-born parents—the third generation and higher—36 percent.
- There is no substantial difference across generations in the share of Latino high school graduates ages 18 to 24 who go to community college. The rate is about the same for the foreign born, 46 percent, as it is for the second generation, 42 percent.
- Enrollment in two-year colleges varies considerably by national origin. Some 46 percent of Mexican college students in the 18- to 24-year-old group attend two-year institutions compared to about 31 percent of Puerto Ricans and Cubans.
- Cubans have by far the highest rate of college attendance of any Latino national origin group with nearly 45 percent of 18- to 24-year-old high school graduates enrolled. For Mexicans, the comparable figure is 33 percent and for Puerto Ricans, 30 percent.

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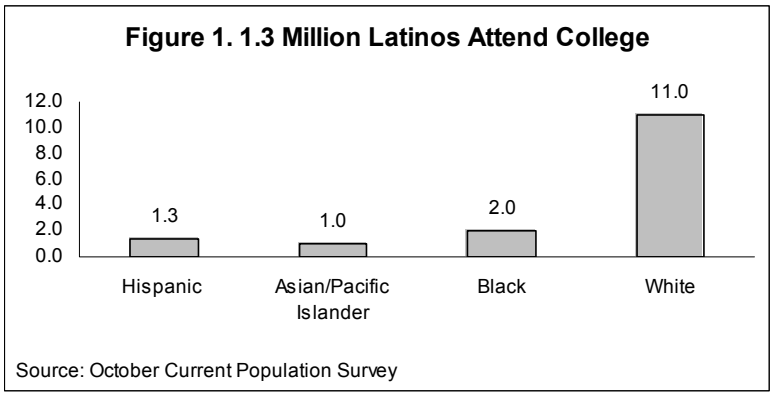
INTRODUCTION

Indisputably, improvements in the extent and quality of education will raise the economic prospects, well-being, and civic engagement of the Hispanic population. Latinos are now the most poorly educated major population group in the United States. White males average 13.3 years of schooling and black males average 12.2. Latino males lag behind with 10.6 years of schooling. Some of this achievement gap reflects low levels of education among many Latino immigrants but that is by no means the entire problem. U.S.-born Hispanic males average 12.0 years of schooling (Smith, 2001).

Seventy-two percent of all high school seniors go on to some form of postsecondary training within two years of high school graduation. Fifty-nine percent of all U.S. workers have at least some college education. A high school diploma no longer serves as the basic credential for successful employment in the U.S. economy. Only individuals with a college degree can expect to enter the mid-ranges of the labor force, let alone the top. Thus, the road to economic advancement for Latinos must run through college. However, Latinos' success at entering and graduating from college affects not only their own well-being but also the nation's well-being. Between 2000 and 2025 the white working age population will decline by five million as baby boomers retire from the labor force. Working age Latinos are projected to increase by 18 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 1999). Thus, the vitality of the U.S. work force increasingly depends on Hispanic educational progress.



In 1996 the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, the nation's largest scholarship granting organization for Latinos, adopted a new mission to double the rate of Hispanics earning a college degree. The goal is to reach 18 percent by 2010. That objective became a matter of federal policy in 2000 following the release of a White House report by the Council of Economic Advisors documenting the Hispanic education achievement gap and its potential cost to the economy. On October 12, 2001, President Bush created the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans to advise his administration on how to close the academic achievement gap, including the low rate of college completion.

This report suggests that the first step towards achieving that goal should be to increase the retention and graduation rates for Latinos already enrolled in college. While a

great deal of attention has focused on the high school dropout rate for Hispanics and others, the college dropout rate may be just as significant.

This report provides a detailed examination of the extent and nature of Hispanic college enrollment in comparison to that of adults of other racial/ethnic identities. Enrollment is an important summary measure of Latinos' success in the pursuit of higher education. Being enrolled simply means an individual is taking one or more college courses. Enrollment does not reveal whether the student completed the course(s), the extent of knowledge gained, or whether the student obtained a degree. So, enrollment reflects the ability and opportunity to improve one's education on our nation's college campuses and not whether an improvement was actually achieved. Nonetheless, measuring the extent to which Latinos have the opportunity and desire to improve their skills is important in its own right.

While a great deal of attention has focused on the high school dropout rate for Hispanics and others, the college dropout rate may be just as significant.

Given the disparity between enrollment and subsequent degree completion for Latinos, it is essential to identify and measure different forms of college-going. This report examines the shares of Latinos enrolled in college who are studying part-time versus full-time, who are in two-year versus four-year institutions and who are of traditional college-going ages compared with older students. An important innovation of this report is an additional focus on differences among the major Latino origin groups and generations of Latinos. About two-thirds of Hispanic youth have a foreign-born parent. So, it is important to gauge whether Latinos whose families have been in the United States for generations are having any more success in pursuing collegiate studies than recent arrivals. Similarly, about half of Latino youth with a foreign-born parent are themselves foreign born.[1] Many of them did not attend U.S. elementary and secondary schools which may have limited their ability or their desire to attend a U.S. college.

Detailed breakdowns of college enrollment by racial/ethnic origin and generational status were developed for this report by combining several years of Current Population Survey (CPS) data on college enrollment from the late 1990s.[2] The CPS is a monthly survey of about 50,000 households conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is most familiar as the source of monthly unemployment data, but supplemental questions include a variety of other topics including school enrollment and educational attainment. The figures are presented here on an annual basis for ease of

[1] The percentage of Latinos with a foreign-born parent that are themselves foreign-born depends on the age group and population one is assessing. Older age groups will have greater percentages foreign-born. Among Latino high school graduates between the ages of 18 to 24, about half of those with a foreign-born parent are themselves foreign-born.

[2] Pooling data for the purposes of studying the school enrollment of minorities is quite common. See Mare 1995.

discussion, but they are effectively an annual average over the years 1997 to 2000 (see the Appendix for further details on the data). Total college enrollment was quite stable over these years.[3] Enrollment data for 2001 is not yet publicly available.

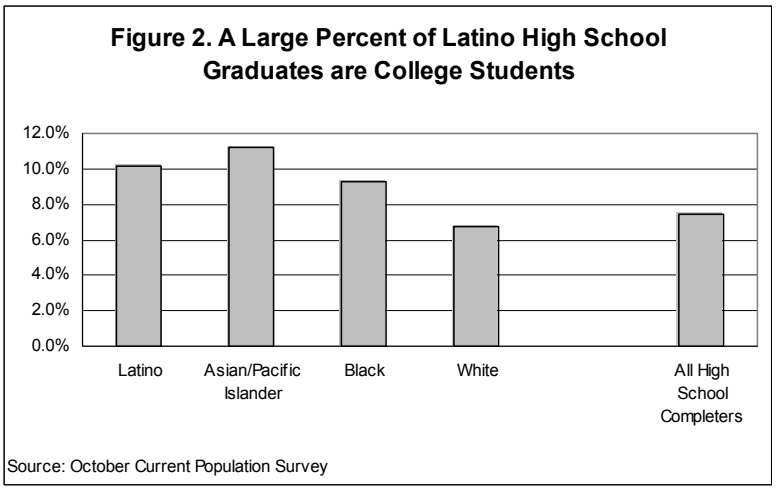
This report is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the unique characteristics of Latino college enrollment in comparison to other adults, and it details Latino college students' disproportionate pursuit of education in ways associated with low levels of degree completion. The second portion of the report examines the differences in college enrollment patterns among Latinos of different generations and national origin groups.

I. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LATINO COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

How Many Latinos Attend College?

In the late 1990s about 15.4 million persons attended the nation's colleges and universities. That number includes undergraduate students at two-year and four-year colleges as well as students pursuing graduate and professional degrees. In order to put this statistic in perspective, consider that at any given moment, about 6 out of every 100 adults is pursuing higher education. A substantially greater number was enrolled in the 1990s than in the late 1980s, and the college ranks are likely to increase again in this decade. As the "baby boom echo" matures into the traditional college-going ages of 18 to 24 years old, enrollment is projected to increase 20 percent from 1999 to 2011 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). The bulk of the additional college students will be minorities, including a sizable and growing number of Hispanic students.

Figure 2. A Large Percent of Latino High School Graduates are College Students



Source: October Current Population Survey

In the late 1990s 1.3 million Latinos went to college, the third largest group of students. About 11 million whites were enrolled in college along with 2 million African Americans (Figure 1)[4].

[3] Over the four years analyzed in this report, college enrollment remained steady. It reached a low of 15.2 million students in 1999 and a high of 15.5 million students in 1998. The difference is not statistically significant.

Latino adults are major stakeholders in the nation's colleges and universities and are extensively pursuing two- and four-year college studies. Of the nation's major racial/ethnic groups, only Asian high school graduates surpass Latino high school graduates in their pursuit of undergraduate education (Figure 2). Of the nation's 166 million high school graduates, about 7 percent or 12.3 million are enrolled in undergraduate studies. The nation's 11.7 million Latino high school graduates attend college at a higher rate. More than 10 percent—nearly 1.2 million Latino high school graduates—pursue undergraduate education at community colleges and four-year colleges. Their enrollment rate clearly demonstrates the value Latinos place on higher education. However, high enrollment is not translating into high graduation rates. Much of the Latino achievement gap is the result of what happens after Hispanic students begin their postsecondary studies. And to understand what keeps these students from reaching graduation day, one has to start by examining the characteristics of Latino college attendance.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of 1995-96 Beginning Postsecondary Students by Persistence Outcome Three Years after Initial Enrollment

	Aspired to a Certificate		Aspired to an Associate's Degree		Aspired to a Bachelor's Degree	
	Attendance status		Attendance status		Attendance status	
Outcome	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Highest Degree Attained						
Attained Certificate	56.5	43.6	7.1	4.8	1.0	4.1
Attained Associate's Degree	2.8	0.6	20.8	4.4	2.7	2.7
Attained Bachelor's Degree	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.8	0.4
No Degree						
Still enrolled in a Less-than-4-year-college	7.3	10.1	31.9	30.9	10.1	26.3
Still enrolled in a 4-year-college	1.8	1.4	7.5	5.1	67.6	38.5
Not enrolled	31.6	44.3	32.7	54.7	17.7	28.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2000)

Part-time and Precarious

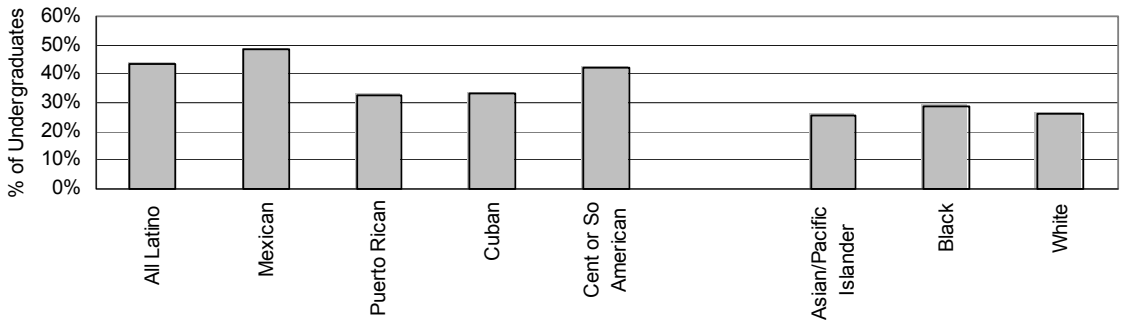
With the exception of students over the age of 34 years old, Latino college students are the least likely to be pursuing full-time college studies. Nearly 85 percent of white students 18 to 24 years old—the traditional ages for college attendance—are enrolled full-time. An identical percentage of black college students pursue their studies full-time. Yet, only 75 percent of Latino traditional college-age students go full-time. Latinos of Cuban origin are the one notable exception. Nearly 90 percent of them go full-time, more than any other racial/ethnic group.

[4] Throughout the report Hispanic status is mutually exclusive of racial categories. That is, "white" always refers to non-Hispanic white, and similarly for Blacks and Asian and Pacific Islanders. The terms "Latino" and "Hispanic" are used interchangeably.

While demonstrating laudable aspirations, Latinos' high levels of part-time enrollment have adverse effects on their levels of degree completion. The U.S. Department of Education considers part-time college enrollment to be a "risk factor" for dropping out of postsecondary education before completion of a degree. The Department's most recent study of college persistence follows a cohort of college students for three years after initial enrollment in postsecondary education. After three years one quarter of the students who initially attended full-time had no degree and were no longer enrolled. Among students who initially attended part-time, nearly half had no degree after three years and had dropped out. No matter what postsecondary course of study a college student is pursuing, and regardless of whether it is at a two-year or a four-year institution, part-time college enrollment is associated with a greater risk of racking up college credits with no degree to show for the effort (Table 1).

In a previous study, the Center documented extraordinarily high labor force participation rates for Latino young adults, including a large number of school-age youths who work even as they are enrolled in school.[5] This is particularly true in immigrant households and would appear to be a simple function of economic need. Among low-skilled Latino immigrants, household incomes are often built to acceptable levels by combining the earnings of several workers who each might be taking home poverty-level wages. Thus, there is intense pressure on young people, especially males, to contribute to the family welfare as soon as they are old enough to work. The results of this economic necessity are vividly evident in the high proportion of immigrant youth who end their education before high school graduation and work full-time instead. The pattern is notably different among U.S.-born Latino youth regardless of whether their parents are immigrants or natives. U.S.-born Latinos 16 to 19 years old are four times more likely to be in school and not working at all than their immigrant peers who came to the United States as adolescents. The strong commitment to work and family does not stop Latinos from enrolling, even part-time, but it may help explain why so few enroll full-time.

Figure 3. Latino Undergraduates Study at Community Colleges



Source: October Current Population Survey

Concentration in two-year institutions

Attachment to family and community as well as economic need appear to be factors in Latinos' exceptionally high rate of enrollment in two-year colleges. Among 18- to 24-year-olds, 44 percent of Hispanic undergraduates attend a two-year school, as opposed to about 30 percent of both white and black undergraduates.[6] The heavy reliance on two-year schools is not just characteristic of Latino students when they are of traditional college age. Latino college students over the age of 24 years old are more likely than their peers of any other racial/ethnic group to be enrolled at two-year institutions. As Latinos get older, an ever greater share attend two-year schools. More than 55 percent of Latino undergraduates over the age of 35 years old attend two-year colleges.

Latinos of Mexican origin have the highest proportion of traditional college-age undergraduates attending community colleges. Almost half of Mexican undergraduates attend a two-year school—the highest proportion of any Latino national-origin group.[7] Slightly less than a third of Puerto Rican undergraduates attend two-year schools which is the lowest share (Figure 3). Foreign-born Latino undergraduates are not more likely than native-born Latinos to attend community colleges. For example, among 18- to 24-year-old Latino undergraduates, 46 percent of the foreign-born attend two-year schools. Among comparable second-generation Latinos, 42 percent attend two-year schools.

The strong commitment to work and family does not stop Latinos from enrolling, even part-time, but it may help explain why so few enroll full-time.

Community colleges and other two-year institutions typically feature a number of characteristics that help explain their appeal to Latino students. As a rule, tuition is lower compared to four-year colleges. Degree programs are often designed to accommodate part-time students, and classes are scheduled in the evenings to accommodate students with full-time jobs. Also, many two-year institutions offer courses that aim more at improving job skills rather than at advancing a student towards a degree. These factors would logically attract low-income students. However, economic necessity alone does not explain the higher rates of enrollment by Latinos because African Americans, who are also

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[5] "Work or Study: Different Fortunes of Latino Generations," Richard Fry and B. Lindsay Lowell, Pew Hispanic Center, May 2002

[6] National Center for Education Statistics tallies indicate that more than half of Hispanic college enrollment is in two-year schools. College enrollment figures based on the Current Population Survey indicate that less than half of Hispanic enrollment is in two-year schools. See the Appendix for further discussion.

[7] Some of the heavy reliance of Mexican-origin Hispanics on two-year colleges is a "California effect." Over 40 percent of Mexican-origin Hispanics reside in California. California has a very well-developed, extensive community college system. But even outside of California, Mexican college students are overrepresented in community colleges. Outside of California, 23 percent of all traditional college-age students attend two-year colleges. Outside of California, over 33 percent of Mexican-origin traditional college-age students enroll in two-year colleges.

at the lower end of the income scale on average, attend two-year institutions at a much lower rate, indeed a rate similar to that of whites.

Community colleges are usually located near residential areas and rarely feature dormitories. An emphasis on close family ties is one characteristic shared by most Latinos regardless of national origin or income, and among Latino immigrants this often translates into an expectation that children will live with their parents until they marry.[8] Moreover, many community colleges welcome students with low levels of academic achievement or aptitude, and many also offer classes in English as a second language. Finally, many community colleges have transfer agreements with baccalaureate institutions so that credits earned at a two-year institution can be applied towards a four-year degree, thus providing a cheaper and more accessible way to make a start towards a bachelor's diploma.

Despite these benefits, however, their predilection for two-year schools may adversely affect Latinos' chances of sticking with their studies and finishing with a degree. Recent U.S. Department of Education tabulations of student persistence rates suggest that Latino students are more likely to drop out if they begin their college studies at two-year colleges (National Center on Education Statistics, 2000). Degree completion also lags for students who begin at two-year colleges. More than half of those students that initially enroll at two-year colleges never complete a postsecondary degree, whereas almost six in 10 four-year college entrants complete at least a bachelor's degree (Kane and Rouse, 1999). A recent longitudinal study followed college students for three years after their initial enrollment. Among Hispanics, 39 percent of those who began at other than four-year schools had no degree and were no longer enrolled after three years. By contrast, only 18 percent of those who began at four-year-schools had no degree and were no longer enrolled (National Center on Education Statistics, 2000).

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The size of the so-called "diploma effect" on an individual's earnings is a matter of contention, but nearly all analysts concur that getting a degree has a positive impact. For example, a well-known analysis finds that all postsecondary degrees yield a "diploma effect" and that the amount of the wage gain varies depending on the type of degree. White men with associate's degrees earn 8 to 19 percent more than un-credentialed men with similar years of completed schooling. Those with a bachelor's degree earn 25 percent more than identically educated white men lacking the credential (Jaeger and Page, 1996).

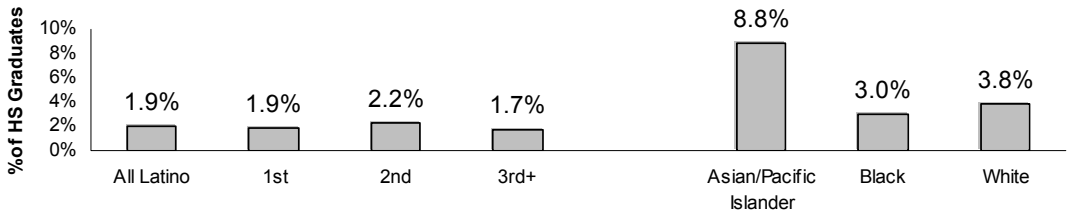
Low enrollment in graduate and professional schools

[8] National Survey on Latinos in America, The Washington Post/ Kaiser Family Foundation/ Harvard University Survey Project, 1999

Though many Latino high school graduates may be extensively furthering their education and skills on our nation's two-year and four-year campuses, very few are gaining a bachelor's degree and then moving on to the highest echelons of the American education system. U.S. higher education might be conceived of as a pyramid with graduate and professional schools at the top. Whether it is a MBA or a PhD or a degree from a medical or law school, advanced education opens doors to the nation's best-paid and most influential careers. Indeed, such credentials are nearly essential to practice many professions from teaching to dentistry, from engineering to economics. In the realms of commerce, finance and manufacturing, an advanced degree is a key qualification for even mid-range managerial jobs. Simply put, in American society today attainment of an advanced degree markedly enhances the likelihood of entry into positions of leadership and status.

Recently published tabulations suggest that the typical holder of a bachelor's degree earns $2.1 million over 40 years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). Those with master's degrees earn $2.5 million, doctorates $3.4 million, and professional degree $4.4 million. Persons who obtain advanced degrees have demonstrated greater diligence and tenacity in their education than those who quit earlier, and they would probably earn more due to these characteristics even if they did not complete an advanced degree. Nonetheless, careful statistical studies that control for the characteristics of the workers indicate that those with advanced degrees earn at least 10 percent more than otherwise similar workers with bachelor's degrees (Grogger and Trejo, 2002, Jaeger and Page, 1996).

Figure 4. Latinos Trail Far Behind in Attending Graduate School



Source: October Current Popluation Survey

Young Latinos are unambiguously trailing in the pursuit of graduate and professional education. For example, in the 25- to 34-year-old age bracket (the typical age for graduate school attendance), 3.8 percent of white and 3.0 percent of African American high school graduates are enrolled in graduate school. However, only 1.9 percent of similarly aged Latino high school graduates are pursuing graduate studies. Latinos have the lowest rates of graduate school enrollment of any major racial/ethnic group (Figure 4) and this is true regardless of whether they come from an immigrant family or not. Among the native-born children of immigrants (the second generation), 2.2 percent of Latino high

school graduates are attending graduate school, and the comparable statistics are 1.9 and 1.7 percent for first- and third-generation Hispanics respectively. The low rates of graduate school enrollment reflect a number of factors. Chief among them, of course, is the relatively low number of Latino students gaining a bachelor's degree, which is the necessary prerequisite for graduate studies. So, in relative terms, young Hispanics clearly are not pursuing the higher echelons of American higher education. Lacking advanced degrees, Latinos will be underrepresented in the nation's most prestigious job opportunities. Improving the rates at which young Latinos complete bachelor's degrees is a prerequisite for increasing graduate school opportunities for Latinos.

Latinos are older students

While college attendance at any age can be beneficial, it is most advantageous for college students who are 18 to 24 years old, the traditional age for college attendance. More than 7 out of 10 of all undergraduates are in this age group. While Hispanic enrollment in college seems extensive, it is low at the propitious college-going age. Among high school graduates 18 to 24 years old, 35 percent of Hispanics are enrolled in college compared to 46 percent of whites and 40 percent of blacks.

A strong case can be made for the advantages of completing college by the age of 24 years old. College students in the traditional age range are more persistent in their post-secondary studies. They are more likely to earn a bachelor's degree and go on to attain valuable advanced degrees (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Compared to those in their late twenties, younger students are less likely to be married and have children, and so it is perhaps easier for them to remain focused on their education. From an economic standpoint, the wage gains from completing a college education diminish as the student ages. Individuals who get their bachelor's degree at a younger age get a bigger boost to their earnings than older graduates (Monks, 1997). The earnings are not only bigger but one has more time to reap those benefits by completing postsecondary training earlier in life. Finally, college enrollment at a later age is more costly. Older adults tend to earn more and thus they are deferring more income than a younger student if they choose to study rather than work. Though Latino high school graduates are extensively participating in the nation's two-year and four-year colleges, significant numbers are attending at ages that do not provide the maximum benefits.

II. THE BACKGROUNDS OF LATINO COLLEGE STUDENTS

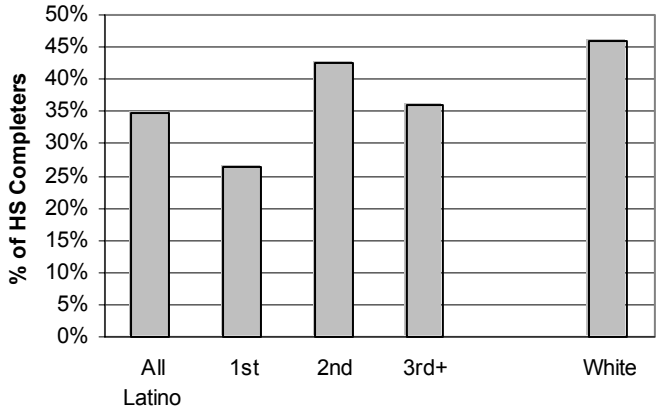
National Origins and Generations

There is substantial diversity among Latino origin groups in college enrollment. Among 18 to 24 year olds, Cubans have the highest rate of college enrollment with 45

percent of Cuban high school graduates enrolled in undergraduate, graduate or professional schools, which is close to the white rate. At the other end of the spectrum, 30 percent of Puerto Rican high school graduates and about 33 percent of Latinos of Mexican origin are enrolled.

Cubans and Central and South Americans also fare relatively well in pursuing graduate studies. For Central and South Americans and Cubans, graduate school attendance rates are 3.5 percent and 3.4 percent among 25- to 34-year-old high school graduates. That is close to the white rate of 3.8 percent.

Figure 5. The Second Generation has a High 18-to-24 College Enrollment Rate



Source: October Current Population Survey

Latino foreign-born youth are less likely to enroll in college than their U.S.-born Latino peers (Vernez and Abrahamse, 1996). In the traditional age group, 25 percent of foreign-born Latinos who graduated from high school are enrolled in an undergraduate institution. For the Latino second generation—the U.S.-born children of immigrants—40 percent of high school graduates are enrolled. This immigrant disadvantage in college-going does not apply to Asians, and thus in the United States today it is unique to Latinos among the major ethnic groups.[9] The undergraduate enrollment rate for Asian high school graduates of the traditional age group is 58 percent for both the first and second generations.

A significant number of Latino foreign-born youth come to the United States after finishing their studies in home-country elementary or secondary schools. Most immigrant Latino youth are less proficient in English than their native-born counterparts. Along with language difficulties, their reduced exposure to U.S. schools and culture may dampen their pursuit of a college education. Also, unlike other immigrant youth, foreign-born Latino youth may have come to the United States primarily to work rather than to pursue a university education.[10]

[9] For individuals of any race/ethnicity, Betts and Lofstrom (2000) find that immigrants have higher college enrollment rates than their native counterparts of the same age and that it is the immigrants who are most highly educated upon arrival in the United States that are the most likely to further their education.

[10] Of the roughly 600,000 F-1 student visas admitted during fiscal year 1999, over half went to students from Asian countries. Students from Mexico, Central and South America, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic obtained about 82,000 F-1 visas or 15 percent of the F-1 student visas.

Native-born Latino high school graduates, especially the second generation, are more successful in pursuing college studies than their immigrant peers. About 42.4 percent of second generation 18- to 24-year-old Latino high school graduates are attending college, which is near the white rate of 45.8 percent (Figure 5).[11] The enrollment rate is lower, 35.9 percent, for Latino high school graduates of the third and higher generation—the U.S.-born children of U.S.-born parents.[12]

The relatively strong performance of the Latino second generation in attending college is fairly widespread across all origin groups. Among 18- to 24-year-old high school graduates, nearly 55 percent of second generation Central and South American youth attends college, well above the white rate. About half of Cuban and 42.7 percent of Mexican second generation high school graduates attend college.[13]

Income and Gender

The patterns in college enrollment among Latino populations match up fairly closely with their socioeconomic profile. Cubans as well as Central and South Americans tend to be among the better-off Latino households with average household incomes above $40,000. Mexican origin and Puerto Rican households tend to be less well-off, with average household incomes below $37,000, which is below the average household income level of African Americans (Bean et al., 2001). Similarly, native-born Latino households tend to be substantially richer than foreign-born households. Mexican-origin Latinos have the lowest average household income among the native born at $42,000, but this is well above the African American average household income. Thus, among Hispanics, as with the U.S. population overall, the children from higher income families are more successful in obtaining a college education.

[11] Note that the subpar college attendance of Latino immigrants is not confined to immigrants of Mexican origin. Among each Latino origin group examined, the rate of college attendance among 18- to 24-year-old high school graduates is lower for the foreign born than the U.S. born. This contrasts with Vernez and Abrahamse's (1996) tabulations from the 1990 Census.

[12] Rates of immediate entry into postsecondary education follow a similar pattern. About two-thirds of second-generation Hispanics in the 1992 high school graduating class went to postsecondary education within two years of graduation, compared to 62 percent of third-generation and higher Latino graduates (NCES, 1998).

[13] Given the different states of residence of the various Latino origin groups, it is perhaps surprising that Latino college students are fairly uniform in their characteristics. Two-thirds of Latinos of Mexican origin reside in either California or Texas. Puerto Ricans concentrate in the northeastern states of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Two-thirds of Cubans live in Florida (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Since each state has its own system of higher education in terms of governance, community colleges vs. four-year colleges, reliance on public vs. private institutions, and levels of state aid, one might expect that residency patterns would generate greater differences among Latino college students by origin group (National Center on Education Statistics, 1999).

Table 2: Percent of High School Completers Enrolled in College, by Generation, 1997 to 2000

	Hispanic generation			Non-Hispanic White generation			Non-Hispanic Black generation			Non-Hispanic Asian generation		
	Foreign-born	2nd	3rd+	Foreign-born	2nd	3rd+	Foreign-born	2nd	3rd+	Foreign-born	2nd	3rd+
Male	7.1	14.7	11.2	9.4	6.8	8.0	13.4	19.2	9.0	14.3	27.8	12.0
Female	9.2	19.5	13.4	8.2	6.9	9.2	14.4	23.3	11.6	13.8	24.5	13.0
Both sexes	8.1	17.1	12.4	8.8	6.9	8.6	13.9	21.4	10.4	14.0	26.3	12.5

Source: October Current Population Survey

And, like college students in the overall U.S. population, female Hispanics outnumbered males in college classrooms by a fair margin. Fifty-seven percent of the 1.3 million Latino college students are female. Table 2 reports the aggregate college enrollment rates by gender for high school graduates. The rates for minority groups tend to be above the white rate because minority populations are younger. College going tends to be a youthful activity.

CONCLUSIONS

College enrollment data reveal that Hispanic students value university education. Given that among high school graduates Hispanics are second only to Asians in attendance at colleges and universities, there can be no doubt that Latino families are willing to invest in their children's education. Yet, the numbers of students who reach graduation are reduced by part-time enrollment, a concentration in two-year institutions and a predilection to prolong undergraduate education beyond the traditional age. These traits are not deserving of criticism, nor is it the intent to criticize them here. Rather, these means of college attendance are the results of tradeoffs between the desire to gain an education and powerful forces of family, community and affordability. Many young Latinos are making a generational leap when they go beyond high school. As the first in their families to pursue higher education, they lack the invaluable support systems at home that most American college students take for granted. Finally, many Latinos are products of under-funded, under-staffed and under-performing high schools, and as such have not had an adequate preparation for college work.

The results are striking among second-generation Latinos, a young, fast-growing population that is destined to have a tremendous impact on Latino communities and the nation as a whole. When they graduate from high school, they enroll in college at the same rate as their white peers, but they are clearly not attaining bachelor's degrees on anywhere near the scale of whites (Table 3). Some 37 percent of white high school graduates between the ages of 25 to 29 years old have received a bachelor's degree, and that holds for 21 percent of African American high school graduates. But, among

comparable second generation Latinos, more than 10 percent have an associate's degree but only 16 percent have a bachelor's degree.

Table 3: Collegiate Attainment among 25-to-29 Year-old High School Completers, 2001 (in %)

	Hispanic generation				Non-Hispanic	
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Total	White	Black
Associate's degree	7.2	14.6	11.0	10.3	10.5	10.0
Bachelor's degree or more	15.2	16.1	18.6	16.4	36.5	20.6

Source: Current Population Survey

Note: The CPS reveals the highest degree attained. Persons attaining both a bachelor's and associate's degree report attaining a bachelor's degree.

There is no doubt about the importance of raising those graduation rates, and indeed, as noted at the beginning of this report, that is a widely accepted goal. Later this month, on September 30, the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans is due to give the White House its first accounting of which current programs are effective in closing the Hispanic achievement gap and what Federal programs can increase high school and college graduation rates. The data presented here shows that key improvements can be realized by furthering the aspirations of the many Hispanic students already enrolled in college. They have applied and been admitted. They have enrolled and are taking classes. And, they have shown they are motivated.

New policy initiatives should go hand-in-hand with new research efforts because there is still much to be learned about the factors behind the achievement gap in post-secondary education (Garcia, 2001). Among the areas that need further attention are:

- The work obligations and work patterns of Latino undergraduates and the role of student financial aid in improving college persistence. Do Latino undergraduates work more than their peers; is that detrimental to degree completion; and can changes in student financial aid packages influence student persistence?
- Latinos attend different colleges than other groups of students. How much of the baccalaureate shortfall can be explained by the college choices of Latinos, and what factors influence those college choices? In particular, do Latinos attend college where they do because of affordability concerns? How much can financial aid policy influence the college choices of Latinos? What are the difficulties Latino community college students face in transferring to four-year colleges and would improved articulation between two-year and four-year schools benefit Latino college students aspiring to four-year degrees?

- Solid academic preparation is clearly a prerequisite to finishing a four-year degree. How much are academic deficiencies contributing to the low graduation rates for Latinos? To what extent can remedial courses at the college level make up for such deficiencies while keeping students on track for degree completion?
- College is not simply an educational experience; it is also a social experience. To what extent are Latinos encountering difficulties integrating themselves socially on college campuses?

These are complex questions, and our college and university system is highly decentralized. So, a one-size-fits-all approach is not in the offing. We have made progress in making college accessible to Latino high school graduates. The next step is to assist Latino undergraduates in finishing college.

Table 4: Annual College Enrollment, by Race/Ethnicity, 1997 to 2000

	Hispanic					Non-Hispanic			
	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Cent or So Americar	Total	White	Black	Asian/Pacific Islander	All
Total College Enrollment									
18 to 24 years	503,459	64,415	36,225	142,446	816,094	6,732,273	1,113,328	604,773	9,309,250
25 to 34 years	169,130	36,008	12,331	62,099	308,282	2,153,601	488,111	270,645	3,246,227
35 years and over	98,820	14,902	12,464	44,622	192,129	1,982,008	349,332	118,007	2,670,505
All ages	784,687	117,924	61,892	253,395	1,338,904	10,952,142	1,977,409	1,006,850	15,374,730
Type of college									
2-year college									
18 to 24 years	232,067	20,344	11,245	56,433	339,790	1,623,217	302,659	137,691	2,417,650
25 to 34 years	68,727	10,203	2,384	13,070	109,324	466,123	136,216	35,154	750,414
35 years and over	45,597	3,623	3,625	16,280	75,641	541,155	111,658	27,153	767,713
All ages	355,028	34,846	18,126	89,008	538,853	2,662,399	562,573	202,769	3,996,706
4-year college									
18 to 24 years	248,605	42,347	22,469	77,029	437,445	4,603,365	743,953	399,879	6,210,244
25 to 34 years	72,725	17,178	4,844	28,389	134,297	782,556	219,128	85,846	1,235,502
35 years and over	33,673	2,842	2,533	12,088	61,163	589,699	128,728	22,698	813,547
All ages	359,242	64,290	29,846	118,509	640,804	6,026,639	1,106,407	519,077	8,344,630
Graduate									
18 to 24 years	22,787	1,725	2,511	8,984	38,860	505,691	66,716	67,203	681,357
25 to 34 years	27,678	8,627	5,103	20,640	64,661	904,922	132,767	149,645	1,260,311
35 years and over	19,551	8,436	6,306	16,255	55,325	851,154	108,947	68,156	1,089,245
All ages	70,418	18,788	13,920	45,879	159,248	2,263,104	308,430	285,004	3,033,395
Control of college									
Public college	684,242	86,420	50,559	211,583	1,131,977	8,370,561	1,576,536	770,723	11,935,409
Private college	100,444	31,504	11,334	41,812	206,927	2,581,581	400,873	236,127	3,439,320
Attendance status									
Full-time enrollment									
18 to 24 years	361,282	52,950	32,224	109,303	605,632	5,708,828	944,312	534,272	7,829,417
25 to 34 years	64,995	14,504	7,125	27,951	125,637	954,713	224,224	178,308	1,500,301
35 years and over	35,786	2,031	4,033	8,268	59,209	483,932	102,139	51,705	710,282
All ages	472,385	72,084	44,254	149,108	809,279	7,223,913	1,295,837	775,708	10,173,736
Part-time enrollment									
18 to 24 years	142,177	11,466	4,001	33,143	210,463	1,023,445	169,016	70,501	1,479,834
25 to 34 years	104,135	21,504	5,206	34,148	182,645	1,198,888	263,887	92,337	1,745,926
35 years and over	63,034	12,870	8,432	36,354	132,920	1,498,076	247,193	66,303	1,960,224
All ages	312,302	45,840	17,639	104,287	529,626	3,728,229	681,572	231,142	5,200,995

Source: October Current Population Surveys

Table 5: Annual College Enrollment, by Generation, 1997 to 2000

	Hispanic generation			White generation			Non-Hispanic Black generation			Asian/Pacific Islander generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
Total College Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	224,339	340,760	250,993	215,588	436,673	6,080,013	88,753	67,153	957,422	348,179	202,573	54,021
25 to 34 years	136,875	77,882	93,524	129,330	154,115	1,870,156	59,965	23,337	404,809	217,780	33,163	19,702
35 years and over	83,831	40,399	67,900	108,547	120,265	1,753,196	42,747	6,115	300,471	102,145	9,231	6,631
All ages	449,519	471,384	417,999	458,383	718,657	9,775,103	194,266	99,734	1,683,411	674,557	250,876	81,417
Type of college												
2-year college												
18 to 24 years	99,203	136,300	104,287	50,915	103,447	1,468,855	28,034	12,460	262,164	78,062	44,982	14,647
25 to 34 years	45,472	27,141	36,711	17,676	22,047	426,399	14,568	5,820	115,828	24,088	7,162	3,904
35 years and over	31,709	10,971	32,962	21,919	30,982	488,254	11,007	2,783	97,868	23,237	2,469	1,447
All ages	178,330	183,987	176,536	91,177	159,979	2,411,242	53,609	22,042	486,921	126,878	55,252	20,638
4-year college												
18 to 24 years	115,676	185,720	136,047	132,640	292,353	4,178,372	54,952	49,505	639,496	225,625	138,083	36,171
25 to 34 years	59,893	32,880	41,521	43,078	50,404	689,074	30,568	11,198	177,362	63,916	15,639	6,290
35 years and over	28,068	13,829	19,266	29,497	36,458	523,744	14,167	2,208	112,353	18,966	2,810	922
All ages	206,165	234,794	199,840	209,465	382,931	5,434,243	102,488	65,061	938,859	313,468	161,802	43,806
Graduate												
18 to 24 years	9,462	18,740	10,659	32,033	40,873	432,786	5,766	5,188	55,761	44,492	19,509	3,202
25 to 34 years	31,509	17,860	15,290	68,577	81,663	754,682	14,829	6,319	111,619	129,776	10,362	9,507
35 years and over	24,054	15,597	15,672	57,130	52,825	741,199	17,574	1,124	90,249	59,942	3,952	4,262
All ages	65,025	52,599	41,621	157,740	175,746	1,929,619	38,169	12,631	257,629	234,210	33,823	16,971
Control of college												
Public college	382,638	387,706	361,634	332,839	489,954	7,547,768	151,749	66,498	1,358,290	512,820	194,723	63,178
Private college	66,883	83,678	56,365	125,543	228,703	2,227,335	42,518	33,236	325,120	161,736	56,153	18,238
Attendance status												
Full-time enrollment												
18 to 24 years	159,813	246,186	199,631	184,101	366,445	5,158,282	73,038	60,389	810,884	307,254	183,608	43,410
25 to 34 years	54,122	32,627	38,889	76,794	66,576	811,342	30,281	9,246	184,698	147,685	20,042	10,582
35 years and over	20,306	12,329	26,574	31,911	28,066	423,956	15,454	3,066	83,619	44,741	4,507	2,457
All ages	237,474	301,665	270,139	297,724	468,691	6,457,498	121,574	75,830	1,098,434	504,771	214,066	56,872
Part-time enrollment												
18 to 24 years	64,526	94,574	51,360	31,486	70,228	921,731	15,715	6,764	146,537	40,925	18,965	10,611
25 to 34 years	82,753	45,254	54,635	52,536	87,538	1,058,813	29,684	14,091	220,111	70,096	13,121	9,120
35 years and over	63,524	28,071	41,325	76,636	92,199	1,329,241	27,293	3,049	216,852	57,404	4,724	4,174
All ages	212,044	169,718	147,857	160,658	249,965	3,317,605	72,692	23,904	584,976	169,786	36,810	24,545

Source: October Current Population Surveys

Table 6: Annual College Enrollment, by Latino Generation, 1997 to 2000

	Mexican generation			Puerto Rican generation			Cuban generation			Cent or So American generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
Total College Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	103,733	209,649	190,076	11,138	27,271	26,006	14,398	19,584		77,014	62,239	
25 to 34 years	58,598	39,774	70,757	11,567	18,092	6,349	7,541	4,138		48,719	11,377	
35 years and over	24,241	23,101	51,478	4,026	10,876		8,447	3,399		39,891	1,608	3,123
All ages	188,443	279,801	316,441	27,493	56,624	33,807	30,386	27,993	3,514	166,043	79,033	8,318
Type of college												
2-year college												
18 to 24 years	52,030	94,325	85,712	3,576	7,608	9,160	4,992	6,253		32,771	23,662	
25 to 34 years	24,350	14,490	29,887	3,505	5,030	1,668	1,344	1,041		9,667	3,402	
35 years and over	8,572	8,050	28,975	1,739	1,884		3,625			14,788	1,037	455
All ages	86,210	122,343	146,474	8,820	14,522	11,504	9,961	8,166	0	57,226	31,326	455
4-year college												
18 to 24 years	47,925	104,079	96,601	7,563	19,087	15,697	9,406	11,532		39,848	33,988	
25 to 34 years	25,540	17,046	30,139	4,222	10,199	2,756	2,936	1,907		23,351	3,728	
35 years and over	12,277	9,636	11,760	1,760	1,082		648	1,266		10,922	571	595
All ages	86,355	132,157	140,730	14,307	30,753	19,229	12,990	14,705	2,149	74,540	38,871	5,097
Graduate												
18 to 24 years	3,779	11,245	7,763		576	1,149		1,799		4,395	4,589	
25 to 34 years	8,708	8,238	10,731	3,840	2,862	1,925	3,260	1,190		15,701	4,247	
35 years and over	3,392	5,415	10,743	527	7,909		4,174	2,132		14,181		2,073
All ages	15,879	25,300	29,237	4,367	11,347	3,074	7,434	5,121	1,365	34,277	8,836	2,765
Control of college												
Public college	169,545	244,134	270,563	22,614	34,276	29,530	25,930	21,768	2,862	138,826	65,214	7,543
Private college	18,899	35,667	45,878	4,878	22,348	4,277	4,456	6,226	652	27,218	13,819	775
Attendance status												
Full-time enrollment												
18 to 24 years	65,573	144,218	151,490	11,138	20,860	20,951	12,304	18,390		58,101	48,010	
25 to 34 years	18,455	17,470	29,070	5,345	6,970	2,189	4,242	2,231		20,907	5,696	
35 years and over	9,012	6,803	19,971		2,031		1,953	2,080		7,829		439
All ages	93,670	174,590	204,124	17,245	30,246	24,592	18,499	23,573	2,182	87,256	56,873	4,979
Part-time enrollment												
18 to 24 years	38,160	65,431	38,585		6,411	5,054	2,094	1,194		18,913	14,229	
25 to 34 years	40,144	22,303	41,688	6,222	11,122	4,160	3,298	1,907		27,812	5,681	
35 years and over	15,229	16,299	31,506	4,026	8,845		6,494	1,319		32,062	1,608	2,684
All ages	94,774	105,210	112,316	10,248	26,378	9,214	11,886	4,420	1,332	78,787	22,160	3,338

Source: October Current Population Surveys

Table 7: College Enrollment Rates, by Race/Ethnicity, 1997 to 2000

	Hispanic					Non-Hispanic			
	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Cent or So Americar	Total	White	Black	Asian/Pacific Islander	All
				Percent of Population					
Undergraduate Enrollment									
18 to 24 years	17.6	19.3	32.9	23.6	19.8	36.8	28.3	50.4	33.4
25 to 34 years	3.9	5.6	4.3	4.8	4.4	4.9	7.1	6.6	5.2
35 years and over	1.2	0.6	0.8	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.2
All ages	3.5	3.3	3.7	4.5	3.7	4.5	4.9	6.9	4.6
Graduate Enrollment									
18 to 24 years	0.8	0.5	2.5	1.6	1.0	3.0	1.8	6.3	2.6
25 to 34 years	0.8	1.8	3.1	2.4	1.2	3.5	2.6	8.1	3.3
35 years and over	0.3	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.8	0.8	1.5	0.8
All ages	0.3	0.6	1.1	1.0	0.5	1.2	0.9	2.7	1.1
				Percent of High School Graduates					
Undergraduate Enrollment									
18 to 24 years	31.1	28.8	41.7	37.2	33.0	42.4	37.2	56.9	41.2
25 to 34 years	7.3	7.3	4.8	7.1	7.3	5.2	8.0	7.1	5.9
35 years and over	2.7	1.0	1.1	2.4	2.3	1.3	2.3	1.3	1.4
All ages	11.0	7.9	6.2	9.8	10.1	6.7	9.3	11.3	7.4
Graduate Enrollment									
18 to 24 years	1.5	0.8	3.1	2.5	1.7	3.4	2.4	7.1	3.3
25 to 34 years	1.4	2.3	3.4	3.5	1.9	3.8	3.0	8.8	3.8
35 years and over	0.7	1.3	1.2	1.4	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.8	1.0
All ages	1.1	1.5	1.8	2.2	1.4	1.8	1.7	4.4	1.8

Source: October Current Population Surveys

Table 8: College Enrollment Rates, by Generation, 1997 to 2000

	Hispanic generation			White generation			Non-Hispanic Black generation			Asian/Pacific Islander generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
						Percent of Population						
Undergraduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	11.9	28.1	24.8	40.3	44.4	36.3	34.2	38.2	27.4	50.5	53.3	41.8
25 to 34 years	3.1	6.1	6.8	5.8	5.2	4.8	10.8	10.6	6.6	6.2	8.8	6.6
35 years and over	0.9	1.4	2.1	1.1	0.7	1.1	2.4	2.4	1.6	1.1	1.2	0.6
All ages	2.8	4.1	4.6	4.4	3.5	4.6	8.2	6.1	4.6	6.9	7.3	5.8
Graduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	0.5	1.6	1.1	7.0	4.6	2.8	2.4	3.2	1.7	7.4	5.7	2.6
25 to 34 years	0.9	1.8	1.3	6.5	5.9	3.3	3.5	3.9	2.5	9.1	4.0	6.1
35 years and over	0.4	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.5	0.8	1.7	0.5	0.7	1.6	0.9	1.0
All ages	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.3	1.1	1.1	2.0	0.9	0.8	3.7	1.1	1.5
						Percent of High School Graduates						
Undergraduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	25.2	40.1	34.4	46.5	49.5	41.9	44.5	45.9	36.2	58.4	58.1	46.4
25 to 34 years	6.4	7.5	8.7	6.3	5.5	5.2	12.0	11.2	7.5	6.8	9.2	6.7
35 years and over	2.0	2.2	2.9	1.3	0.8	1.3	3.0	2.9	2.2	1.4	1.4	0.6
All ages	7.0	15.2	11.1	5.8	5.2	6.9	11.2	18.7	8.8	9.2	22.7	9.9
Graduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	1.1	2.3	1.5	8.1	5.1	3.2	3.1	3.8	2.2	8.6	6.2	2.9
25 to 34 years	1.9	2.2	1.7	7.1	6.2	3.5	4.0	4.1	2.9	10.0	4.2	6.3
35 years and over	0.8	1.4	0.9	1.5	0.6	0.9	2.1	0.6	0.9	2.0	1.0	1.1
All ages	1.2	1.9	1.2	3.0	1.7	1.7	2.7	2.7	1.6	4.9	3.5	2.6

Source: October Current Population Surveys

Table 9: College Enrollment Rates, by Latino Generation, 1997 to 2000

	Mexican generation			Puerto Rican generation			Cuban generation			Cent or So American generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
						Percent of Population						
Undergraduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	8.1	27.4	23.7	14.0	15.8	32.5	32.6	35.8		18.6	40.3	
25 to 34 years	2.3	6.0	6.7	4.8	6.3	5.3	4.2	5.7		4.4	7.4	
35 years and over	0.6	1.5	2.1	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.6	2.3		1.5	1.6	1.4
All ages	2.3	3.7	4.6	2.0	3.8	4.4	2.6	7.6	2.5	4.2	5.5	2.6
Graduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	0.3	1.6	1.0	0.0	0.3	1.5	0.0	3.6		1.1	3.2	
25 to 34 years	0.4	1.6	1.2	2.4	1.2	2.3	3.2	2.3		2.1	4.4	
35 years and over	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.1	2.9	0.0	0.6	3.9		0.8	0.0	2.9
All ages	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.4	0.8	1.7	1.6	1.1	0.7	1.3
						Percent of High School Graduates						
Undergraduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	19.9	40.4	33.0	22.7	22.7	48.9	42.1	45.0		31.9	50.8	
25 to 34 years	5.9	7.6	8.9	6.4	7.9	7.2	4.7	6.0		6.9	8.0	
35 years and over	2.2	2.4	3.1	1.0	1.4	0.0	0.9	2.6		2.5	2.0	
All ages	7.5	15.5	11.3	4.4	8.6	15.6	3.8	16.4		7.6	24.3	5.8
Graduate Enrollment												
18 to 24 years	0.8	2.3	1.4	0.0	0.5	2.3	0.0	4.6		1.9	4.0	
25 to 34 years	1.0	2.0	1.6	3.2	1.5	3.1	3.6	2.4		3.3	4.8	
35 years and over	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.1	3.7	0.0	0.9	4.3		1.4	0.0	
All ages	0.7	1.5	1.1	0.8	2.1	1.6	1.2	3.7		2.0	3.1	2.9

Source: October Current Population Surveys

Table 10: Characteristics of College Enrollment, by Race/Ethnicity, 1997 to 2000 (in percent)

	Hispanic					Non-Hispanic			
	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Cent or So Americai	Total	White	Black	Asian/Pacific Islander	All
Type of college									
18 to 24 years									
2-year college	46.1	31.6	31.0	39.6	41.6	24.1	27.2	22.8	26.0
4-year college	49.4	65.7	62.0	54.1	53.6	68.4	66.8	66.1	66.7
Graduate	4.5	2.7	6.9	6.3	4.8	7.5	6.0	11.1	7.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
25 to 34 years									
2-year college	40.6	28.3	19.3	21.0	35.5	21.6	27.9	13.0	23.1
4-year college	43.0	47.7	39.3	45.7	43.6	36.3	44.9	31.7	38.1
Graduate	16.4	24.0	41.4	33.2	21.0	42.0	27.2	55.3	38.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
35 years and over									
2-year college	46.1	24.3	29.1	36.5	39.4	27.3	32.0	23.0	28.7
4-year college	34.1	19.1	20.3	27.1	31.8	29.8	36.8	19.2	30.5
Graduate	19.8	56.6	50.6	36.4	28.8	42.9	31.2	57.8	40.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All ages									
2-year college	45.2	29.5	29.3	35.1	40.2	24.3	28.5	20.1	26.0
4-year college	45.8	54.5	48.2	46.8	47.9	55.0	56.0	51.6	54.3
Graduate	9.0	15.9	22.5	18.1	11.9	20.7	15.6	28.3	19.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In public college	87.2	73.3	81.7	83.5	84.5	76.4	79.7	76.5	77.6
Enrolled full-time									
18 to 24 years	71.8	82.2	89.0	76.7	74.2	84.8	84.8	88.3	84.1
25 to 34 years	38.4	40.3	57.8	45.0	40.8	44.3	45.9	65.9	46.2
35 years and over	36.2	13.6	32.4	18.5	30.8	24.4	29.2	43.8	26.6
All ages	60.2	61.1	71.5	58.8	60.4	66.0	65.5	77.0	66.2
Undergraduates older than age 24	30.9	34.1	27.9	33.6	32.2	27.4	35.7	23.7	28.9

Source: October Current Population Surveys

The upper left cell reads "46.1 percent of Mexican origin 18-to-24 year old college students were enrolled in 2-year colleges."

Table 11: Characteristics of College Enrollment, by Generation, 1997 to 2000 (in percent)

	Hispanic generation			White generation			Non-Hispanic Black generation			Asian/Pacific Islander generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
Type of college												
18 to 24 years												
2-year college	44.2	40.0	41.5	23.6	23.7	24.2	31.6	18.6	27.4	22.4	22.2	27.1
4-year college	51.6	54.5	54.2	61.5	67.0	68.7	61.9	73.7	66.8	64.8	68.2	67.0
Graduate	4.2	5.5	4.2	14.9	9.4	7.1	6.5	7.7	5.8	12.8	9.6	5.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
25 to 34 years												
2-year college	33.2	34.8	39.3	13.7	14.3	22.8	24.3	24.9	28.6	11.1	21.6	19.8
4-year college	43.8	42.2	44.4	33.3	32.7	36.8	51.0	48.0	43.8	29.3	47.2	31.9
Graduate	23.0	22.9	16.3	53.0	53.0	40.4	24.7	27.1	27.6	59.6	31.2	48.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
35 years and over												
2-year college	37.8	27.2	48.5	20.2	25.8	27.8	25.7	45.5	32.6	22.7	26.7	21.8
4-year college	33.5	34.2	28.4	27.2	30.3	29.9	33.1	36.1	37.4	18.6	30.4	13.9
Graduate	28.7	38.6	23.1	52.6	43.9	42.3	41.1	18.4	30.0	58.7	42.8	64.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
All ages												
2-year college	39.7	39.0	42.2	19.9	22.3	24.7	27.6	22.1	28.9	18.8	22.0	25.3
4-year college	45.9	49.8	47.8	45.7	53.3	55.6	52.8	65.2	55.8	46.5	64.5	53.8
Graduate	14.5	11.2	10.0	34.4	24.5	19.7	19.6	12.7	15.3	34.7	13.5	20.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In public college	85.1	82.2	86.5	72.6	68.2	77.2	78.1	66.7	80.7	76.0	77.6	77.6
Enrolled full-time												
18 to 24 years	71.2	72.2	79.5	85.4	83.9	84.8	82.3	89.9	84.7	88.2	90.6	80.4
25 to 34 years	39.5	41.9	41.6	59.4	43.2	43.4	50.5	39.6	45.6	67.8	60.4	53.7
35 years and over	24.2	30.5	39.1	29.4	23.3	24.2	36.2	50.1	27.8	43.8	48.8	37.1
All ages	52.8	64.0	64.6	65.0	65.2	66.1	62.6	76.0	65.3	74.8	85.3	69.9
Undergraduates older than age 24	43.0	20.3	34.7	37.3	25.8	27.1	45.0	25.3	35.3	29.6	12.9	19.5

Source: October Current Population Surveys

The upper left cell reads "44.2 percent of Hispanic foreign-born 18-to-24 year old college students were enrolled in 2-year colleges."

Table 12: Characteristics of College Enrollment, by Latino Generation, 1997 to 2000 (in percent)

	Mexican generation			Puerto Rican generation			Cuban generation			Cent or So American generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
Type of college												
18 to 24 years												
2-year college	50.2	45.0	45.1	32.1	27.9	35.2	34.7	31.9		42.6	38.0	
4-year college	46.2	49.6	50.8	67.9	70.0	60.4	65.3	58.9		51.7	54.6	
Graduate	3.6	5.4	4.1	0.0	2.1	4.4	0.0	9.2		5.7	7.4	
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
25 to 34 years												
2-year college	41.6	36.4	42.2	30.3	27.8	26.3	17.8	25.2		19.8	29.9	
4-year college	43.6	42.9	42.6	36.5	56.4	43.4	38.9	46.1		47.9	32.8	
Graduate	14.9	20.7	15.2	33.2	15.8	30.3	43.2	28.8		32.2	37.3	
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
35 years and over												
2-year college	35.4	34.8	56.3	43.2	17.3		42.9	0.0		37.1	64.5	14.6
4-year college	50.6	41.7	22.8	43.7	9.9		7.7	37.2		27.4	35.5	19.1
Graduate	14.0	23.4	20.9	13.1	72.7		49.4	62.7		35.5	0.0	66.4
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	100.0
All ages												
2-year college	45.7	43.7	46.3	32.1	25.6	34.0	32.8	29.2	0.0	34.5	39.6	5.5
4-year college	45.8	47.2	44.5	52.0	54.3	56.9	42.7	52.5	61.2	44.9	49.2	61.3
Graduate	8.4	9.0	9.2	15.9	20.0	9.1	24.5	18.3	38.8	20.6	11.2	33.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In public college	90.0	87.3	85.5	82.3	60.5	87.3	85.3	77.8	81.4	83.6	82.5	90.7
Enrolled full-time												
18 to 24 years	63.2	68.8	79.7	100.0	76.5	80.6	85.5	93.9		75.4	77.1	
25 to 34 years	31.5	43.9	41.1	46.2	38.5	34.5	56.3	53.9		42.9	50.1	
35 years and over	37.2	29.4	38.8	0.0	18.7		23.1	61.2		19.6	0.0	14.1
All ages	49.7	62.4	64.5	62.7	53.4	72.7	60.9	84.2	62.1	52.6	72.0	59.9
Undergraduates older than age 24	41.0	19.3	35.1	48.5	40.2	14.4	37.3	18.4		44.6	12.4	

Source: October Current Population Surveys

The upper left cell reads "50.2 percent of Mexican origin foreign-born 18-to-24 year old college students were enrolled in 2-year colleges."

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APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF DATA

Our college enrollment estimates are derived from the October Current Population Survey (CPS). Collected by the U.S. Census Bureau, the CPS is the nation's foremost national monthly survey. The Survey is the basis for the monthly release of the national unemployment rate and additional indicators of the vitality of the labor market. In October the Census Bureau supplements the basic interview questions with additional questions on school enrollment. The Census Bureau publishes tabulations on college enrollment (U.S. Census Bureau, undated). Tabulations based on the CPS should not be confused with the fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions tabulated by the National Center for Education Statistics. The National Center for Education Statistics fall enrollment tallies are part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, a survey of postsecondary institutions (National Center on Education Statistics, 2001). The CPS is a household survey, and thus the person reports on his/her college enrollment status, rather than the postsecondary institution. A major advantage of the CPS is that it possesses a wealth of information on all individuals, not just the characteristics of college students.

The October CPS surveys about 50,000 households or 120,000 persons. Approximately 6,500 of these individuals are enrolled in college. "Traditional college age" is the age range of 18 to 24 years of age, and we wanted to examine college enrollment behavior for this conventional age group. A CPS has about 11,000 18- to 24-year-old respondents, of which about 1,500 are Hispanic. In order to derive college enrollment estimates for the major Latino origin groups and generations, the October 2000 CPS did not provide sufficient sample sizes. We surmounted sample size considerations by concatenating the four most recent CPS school enrollment supplements, 1997 to 2000. Appendix Table A reports the unweighted sample sizes for the combined 1997 to 2000 sample.[14] All the enrollment counts reported in the paper are on an annual basis. The annual figures are the average of the 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2000 counts. That is, we weighted the combined 1997 to 2000 data file by dividing the CPS weight by 4.

[14] The CPS is a nationally representative sample of housing units. It does not, however, sample a completely new set of housing units each month. Rather, the housing units rotate in and out of the sample (Madrian and Lefgren, 1999). As a result of the rotation scheme, half of the housing units in October of year *t* will be in the sample of October of year *t+1*. We did not adjust our estimates for the nonindependence of the housing units across years.

Table A.Unweighted Sample Sizes, by Generation, 1997 to 2000

	Mexican generation			Puerto Rican generation			Cuban generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
18 to 24 years	1,798	1,033	1,103	122	255	114	63	72	14
25 to 34 years	3,351	791	1,388	279	408	143	157	81	20
35 years and over	4,737	1,676	2,855	1,219	447	193	1,023	84	30
All ages	11,330	9,974	9,179	1,860	1,906	1,117	1,317	462	130

	Central or South American generation			Non-Hispanic White generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
18 to 24 years	611	217	53	707	1,462	26,836
25 to 34 years	1,245	156	33	1,834	2,471	42,661
35 years and over	2,591	141	120	8,874	20,361	172,392
All ages	4,958	1,965	348	12,373	29,966	325,094

	Non-Hispanic Black generation			Non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander generation		
	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher	Foreign-born	Second	Third & Higher
18 to 24 years	340	229	4,315	1,001	612	322
25 to 34 years	610	233	6,086	2,362	502	416
35 years and over	1,682	343	20,301	6,183	1,006	1,195
All ages	2,927	2,177	45,916	10,621	5,289	3,009

Source: October Current Population Surveys